



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of New Hampshire*

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MEDIA RELEASE

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**MANCHESTER MAN CONVICTED OF FEDERAL CRACK COCAINE
DISTRIBUTION AND WEAPON CHARGES**

Re: United States v. Michael Martin

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE: United States Attorney Tom Colantuono, N.H. State Police Colonel Gary Sloper, and Manchester Police Chief Mark Driscoll announced that **Michael Martin**, date of birth April 13, 1977, of Manchester, NH, was convicted today of crack cocaine distribution and weapon possession charges.

MARTIN was arrested by Manchester and New Hampshire State Police officers on October 15, 2002, along with ten others, as part of their joint "Operation Beantown" investigation, so named because of its focus on alleged Boston-based drug traffickers that had relocated to Manchester.

MARTIN entered a guilty plea before U.S. District Judge Steven J. McAuliffe to an information alleging that he distributed cocaine base, also known as "crack cocaine," in Manchester on August 15, 2002, and unlawfully possessed a firearm when he was arrested on October 15, 2002. A loaded 9mm handgun was seized from his bedroom at the time of his arrest. Unlawful drug users are prohibited under federal law from possessing firearms.

Judge McAuliffe detained MARTIN without bail pending his sentencing hearing scheduled for April 22, 2003 in the U.S. District Court in Concord. MARTIN faces a potential maximum sentence of 20 years imprisonment.

U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated, "This case demonstrates our Office's commitment to aggressively prosecute drug traffickers, including street-level crack dealers operating in Manchester and New Hampshire's other larger cities. Operation Beantown is in keeping with our "Project Safe Neighborhoods" initiative in that it combines the resources of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to combat the disastrous impact of crack cocaine on our urban neighborhoods and their residents. This Office will also continue to work to keep firearms out of the hands of unlawful drug users, a primary objective of the Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative in the District of New Hampshire." The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Joseph N. Laplante.